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September/October 2019

Volume 12 Issue 5

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Building strength in just 30 minutes

Submitted by 9Round London

Since opening April 1 of this year, 9Round's first London location has been making members stronger in just 30 minutes – both mentally and physically. While the London location is locally owned and operated, the 9Round franchise has over 750 locations worldwide. 9Round London joins over 40 other locations in Ontario, and many more across Canada.

9Round London is proud of its commitment to its members' health and wellness, and to the education of its trainers. The 9Round London team consists of five trainers, with backgrounds ranging from personal training, fat loss coaching, professional fighting, physiotherapy, and sports psychology. The diversity of staff creates the ultimate blend of experience for members – whether they have recently embarked on their fitness journey, or are already well-established athletes. The team is driven by its passion for fitness, and they have a strong desire to see their members achieve their goals. A willingness to modify workouts to suit different injuries and abilities gears the workouts towards individual results.

Working out at 9Round is always a unique experience. There are no class times, so the workout starts whenever you are ready to go. The 9Round circuit is focused on both losing weight and building lean muscle, using a blend of kickboxing techniques with high intensity interval training so that it's a killer workout every time. The workout also changes daily, meaning that every day you will be challenged differently and pushed to a new limit. It is guaranteed to make you sweat!

Progress can already be seen in members in London. Even those with no kickboxing experience have increased skill, lost weight, and gained newfound confidence. Members at 9Round have seen progress in their cardiovascular health, general mobility, flexibility and mental acuity. Many gyms emphasize the importance of building physical strength, but the role of mental strength and resiliency is often minimized in the fitness industry. Not only does exercise release endorphins that are important for mental health, but punching a heavy bag is an excellent way to release stress!

9Round London is looking forward to growing and opening more locations London in the coming months. Anyone who is interested in becoming a member and joining the 9Round family is encouraged to come in and take advantage of the low rates being offered. It is as simple as walking in during open hours, calling the club, or booking online to try the first workout for free!

Athletes at 9Round London take a break from high energy workouts to pose for a group photo: Back row (left to right): Jake Young, Allison Pym, Jeramy Grenier, Hashim al-Rohani, Masooma Khawaja. Front row: Drew Venhuizen, Rachel Pym

London SportsXpress .ca

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Special thanks to London Minor Football Association for the cover photo.

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Road trip details available on page 49 or at

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NINJA KIDS is back!

Contributions by CTC Obstacles

NINJA KIDS is returning, and this time with even more classes and a brand new, exciting program! We want both the parents and the kids to see all the obstacles and skills they have conquered!

NINJA kids is a fitness class that incorporates obstacles, balance work, core training, and conditioning. The NINJAs not only learn the techniques required to conquer the obstacles, but also use different functional fitness equipment to build the strength and endurance required to complete ninja courses. Each NINJA will receive a coloured band to begin – and a new one as each new level is reached. Each level has a set of skills that must be conquered in order to move to the next level. Each skill sets up the foundation needed to conquer the harder skills of the next level.

Each class during the week is the same class. This ensures that all NINJAs are getting the same instruction. If you register for more than one class a week, this just means that the kids will get more time to practice the skills. Class day and time will be selected when the NINJA is registered. The class will stay the same for the month. If the day/time needs to be changed, you can request a change for the following month and if there is availability you can be switched.

CTC OBSTACLES
NINJA WARRIOR & PARKOUR PARK

What's the cost?
The monthly fee for the NINJA KIDS program, for up to 3 classes a week/month is $95+ tax. The monthly fee for 4 classes per month is $65 + tax (same day and time each week for the 4 classes). (Note, if there are 5 of the day you are booked for during the month, you can choose to come to 4 of them, or you can choose to come to all 5 for an extra $15 for the month).

When are the classes?

- Tuesday 5:00-6:00pm; 6:15-7:15pm
- Wednesday 6:15-7:15pm
- Thursday 5:15-6:15pm; 6:30-7:30pm
- Saturday 9:00-10:00; 10:00-11:00am

Full program starts October 1st.
Registration can begin at any time in any month.
Regular September schedule is Tuesday, Thursday 6:00-7:00pm and Saturday 9:00-10:00am.

We want parents working out too. We have an adult class at the same time as all the kid's class. Kids do what they see, what a confidence booster for them to see you working out too! (adult memberships are discounted) Monthly memberships will be prorated until the end of the month and automatically renewed at the beginning of each month.

For more information or to register, please email: ctcobstacles@gmail.com.
www.ctcobstacles.ca

CTC Obstacles, London's first obstacle gym, is ready to welcome back NINJA KIDS, a fitness class that incorporates obstacles, balance work, core training, and conditioning.

SportsXpress Network

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2019

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Benefits of barefoot training

Submitted by Coach Rory Kosonic, Owner, RPG Training Systems

Athletic shoes protect the foot and ankle by limiting range of motion. However, socks and shoes interfere with communication between your feet and brain about how your body moves – like position, speed and direction (known as proprioception). The brain returns information to the body, telling it how to adjust. Without interference, feedback travels faster and more efficiently, allowing your body to correct more quickly, improve stability, prevent injury and improve performance.

The more information you can get from your feet, the stronger, more flexible and adaptive you become. Training with bare feet develops intrinsic muscles. You are more focused and have more control – but you must work harder to keep your body upright and balanced. Everything is engaged: your core, your glutes, and your hips. With all muscles activated and weight distributed appropriately, muscle force production improves. Now stronger, focused, engaged and connected, you will be better able to assess and improve weaknesses.

Common Sense Must Prevail

Barefoot training should be done in a proper, safe environment:

- Be cognizant of increased risk of bacterial or fungal infections
- Consider artificial turf, courts and rubberized floors that offer a firm but forgiving surface
- Wear shoes if mechanical issues exist in your foot or if you suffer neuropathy
- Consider working with a professional trainer with expertise and experience

Ready to Get Started?

Simply begin barefoot training by incorporating it into your warmup. Don't rush. If added too quickly, you increase the risk of the pain and injury that you are trying to heal and prevent. Implement the following one at a time:

- Run on turf
- Work on balance discs
- Roll each foot with a lacrosse ball with light pressure for a minute or so while seated
- Progress with various walking patterns
- Add mobility drills as you adjust to increased balance and stability
- Include body weight movements
- Vary the positions of your feet

If added to your program properly, barefoot training is an effective method of improving the communication between your feet and brain, allowing you to become stronger, more flexible, stable, balanced and adaptive – which contributes to better performance and prevention of injury.

For more information on RPG Training Systems, and to read the complete article on barefoot training, visit us online at www.rpgtriningsystems.com.

Finally, RPG would like to send out a big congratulations to all of the athletes that completed the inaugural High Performance Volleyball program with Coach Melissa Bartlett of Western University and RPG's Coach Rory.

www.rpgtrainingsystems.com

Barefoot training engages your core, glutes and hips and develops intrinsic muscles

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www.huntfootcare.com

Coach Rory, Jasmine, Helena, Rachel, Liv, Abby, and Layal

Olivia, Maya, Sarah, and Jade

Tourney win highlights big summer

Contributions by West London Tincaps and photo by Kerri Heene

To say the 2019 summer ball season was a success for the London West Tincaps Major Rookie team would be an understatement. The team did a whole lot of winning – both in league play and in tournaments.

Playing against some talented competition in the London District Baseball Association (LDBA), the Tincaps went 14-4 overall, good for third place in the standings. And they finished strong, winning nine of their final 10 games on the year.

One of the highlights of the season for the U9 Tincaps came during tournament play, as the team played fantastic baseball the weekend of July 5-7 and won the 2019 Bob Stark Rookieball Tournament!

Playing on the Oakridge diamonds, the Tincaps opened the weekend Friday afternoon with a convincing 13-5 win over the Waterloo Tigers, racking up 19 hits in the win. The following day, the Tincaps were too much to handle for the Barrie Baycats, as they walloped their way to a 16-5 win.

That set things up for a semi-final against the Ajax Spartans. And the Spartans gave the Tincaps a run for their money. Trailing for the first four innings, London put up a huge seven-run inning to go ahead by two. But Ajax fought their way back, tying things up in the bottom of the seventh to send things into extra innings. There, some of the most exciting baseball of the season was played, as the two evenly-matched teams went back and forth until the 11th inning when, with the game tied at 15, the Tincaps loaded the bases and ended things with a walk-off triple to win 16-15.

In Tincaps capped things off with a big 14-9 win over the Pickering Redsox to become 2019 Bob Stark Rookieball Tournament champions.

www.tincaps.ca

The London West Tincaps Major Rookie team (b. 2010), who were crowned Major A Champions at the Bob Stark Rookie Ball Tournament this summer: Back row (left to right): John Heene, Scott Wain, Gabe Metron, Peter Hymmen. Middle row: Knoxten Scarrow, Austin Hudson, Miller Frank, Ethan Metron, Ben Hymmen, Mark Miller, Noah Clavet, Tyler Dawe, Max Wain. Front row: Peter Thornley, Jackson Heene, Dustyn Hammond

Back to School Math for Athletes

Colman Day a special celebration

Submitted by Eager Beaver Baseball Association

Eager Beaver Baseball Association's 36th annual Colman Day celebration once again showcased the skills of young baseball players and paid respect to the volunteers that founded the league. Held in honour of one of the founders, Frank Colman, players chosen by their teammates compete in all-star games at Labatt Park. The day starts with all T-Ball players participating. Then, all-star games run from Rookie right through to the Midget division.

This year's Colman Day festivities were made even more special by the attendance of family members of several of the founders of EBBA. Frank Colman's son, Frank Jr., and his niece, Sandy Wagter, as well as Gordon Berryhill's nephew, Ed, and Al and Rita Marshall's son, Richard, and their grandson and great grandsons were all present to throw out first pitches and watch some exciting, if rather wet, baseball.

EBBA provides house league baseball for players 4 to 21 years of age. Registration for the 2020 season will start online January 1.

www.ebba.ca

Chase Carey's mom creatively took three old jerseys and created one to represent the three teams that formed the EBBA Peewee all-star team on Colman Day.

EBBA Colman Day Rookie team photo (Photo by Tim Alden)

Sandy Wagter, Frank Colman Jr., Richard Marshall, and Ed Berryhill (Photo by Laura Kaufman)

Eight years of fun, rivalries on the diamond

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Submitted by Lady Nicarao

Lady Nicarao, established in 2011, is a women's slo-pitch team that plays out of Slo-Pitch City in Dorchester, Ontario. The team was started after the men's Nicarao team. That men's squad had been established in 1987 by a Nicaraguan native, Manuel Fonseca, who became a Canadian citizen and wanted to bring his love for baseball and his native country to Canada.

Lady Nicarao has changed over the past eight seasons. The team started as a 'D' level team and then grew to a 'C' level squad. Currently, the women's squad is back to the 'D' level, as players felt they wanted others who were not rated higher to be part of the team (and, thus, lowering the division would be the best decision).

Lady Nicarao plays every year in the Ontario Provincials in Niagara Falls, Ontario in September. The event happens near the end of the ball season, and it serves as a great way to allow the team to connect and prepare for the year to follow. Lady Nicarao plays in two or three tournaments each summer to qualify for the Ontario Provincials.

Lady Nicarao is very grateful for the support of its sponsor, WINMAR Property Restoration Specialists, who has supported the team for the past five years!

Lady Nicarao women's slo-pitch team
Top row (left to right): Stacee Caskey, Pamela Cameron, Maverick Taylor-Clayton, Danielle McCurley, Sarai Fonseca. Bottom row: Jan O'Dea, Tanya Taylor-Clayton, Shannon Clayton, Tammy Weaver, Natalie Currie. Missing from photo: Char Seabourne, Sabrina Dell, Liz Zsebik, Susan Wolfe, Mary Crowley and Hailey Teixeira

Extend your ball season!

Submitted by Centrefield Sports

With the winter months approaching quickly and the weather starting to change, Centrefield Sports keeps your baseball season alive with its exciting fall programming and endless opportunities to develop your skills.

We offer extended hours (starting in September) and fall clinics (starting in October). The facility will be open every day of the week to offer opportunities that fit your schedule.

Indoor Leagues will begin in October for baseball and slo-pitch, with registration opening in early September. Be sure to sign up and secure your spot as they fill up quickly!

Cage rentals are a great way to practice your swing throughout the winter. They're available throughout the daytime and evening hours, but time slots are limited so be sure to reserve in advance. Also, enjoy discounted rental rates offered after 9pm through the week, 8pm on Saturdays and 7pm on Sundays.

At Centrefield Sports, you can work on your skills throughout the fall and winter months, keeping sharp for your next competition season. The facility also offers fall clinics for youngsters!

With all these exciting opportunities, Centrefield Sports would like to keep you updated on our Twitter and Instagram pages. From news updates about the facility, to stories and action shots taken throughout the day, our social media pages will be the quickest way for you to get information. Give us a follow on Instagram (@centrefield_sports) and on Twitter (@cfssports)!

Pro Function Sports Injury Clinic

Being a year-round athlete is exciting and fun, but it's also important to take care of your body. The Pro Function Sports Injury Clinic, located at the facility, offers treatment throughout the year, with daytime and evening hours available. Services include physiotherapy, massage therapy, chiropractic treatment, concussion management, Graston Technique, and sports injury rehab.

Finally, we would like to extend a big welcome to Kristen Hoo, who has joined the CFS team as our new facility manager. Be sure to stop by the front desk and say hello the next time you're in the facility!

www.centrefieldsports.com

Kristen Hoo has joined the Centrefield Sports team as the new facility manager. Welcome, Kristen!

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Time for a tourney!

Submitted by Lou Dawg's Southern BBQ

With Lou Dawg's Southern BBQ highly involved with Coed softball, sponsoring numerous teams in various cities, it now makes perfect sense for the first annual Lou Dawg's Coed softball TOURNAMENT. And it's happening in London on Saturday, Sept. 28 at Glanworth Park – with proceeds going to the Brandon Prust Foundation, which funds programs that help children experiencing pain through illness, long-term care and rehabilitation.

And it will be a full weekend affair. What are some of the tournament highlights? Besides the full day of baseball (from 10am to 10pm) on Saturday, which will also feature a 50/50 draw and silent auction, Lou Dawg's in London (519 Richmond St.) will host live music on Friday, courtesy the Matt Morgan Funk Trio. After play on Saturday, the party will continue back at the restaurant, with the presentation of the tournament trophy, good fun, and live music from Little Magic Sam. And on Sunday, it will be CJ Lee performing as the tournament participants enjoy a Sunday brunch.

Play ball!

www.loudawgs.com

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Werewolves lead the pack

Submitted by London Mens Baseball League

With the majority of the season behind them, the mighty Werewolves remained in first place in late August in the London Mens Baseball League (LMBL) standings, with only two losses to their name, and continued to look like the team to beat this season.

One of those losses, though, came at the hands of Aquarium Services, who beat the Werewolves in a one-run game in late August to close the gap in the standings. Following that game, the Werewolves' lead was reduced to a three-point margin, with Aquarium having a game in hand. In other words, everyone will be watching closely over the final weeks of the season to see if the upstart Aquarium Services team can take over top spot – although they do have their work cut out for them!

If you had the opportunity to catch a game this season, it would have been easy to see why the Werewolves dominated most of their games. Phil Bruijns, Tom Couchie and Robert Ramsdale were nearly untouchable on the mound throughout the regular season. Meanwhile, offensively, every player on the team's roster had an on-base percentage of .333 or better. In other words, it's been tough to prevent the Werewolves from scoring runs this season. That combination of stellar pitching and phenomenal hitting has made them a mighty force, well-positioned to make a run at the title this fall.

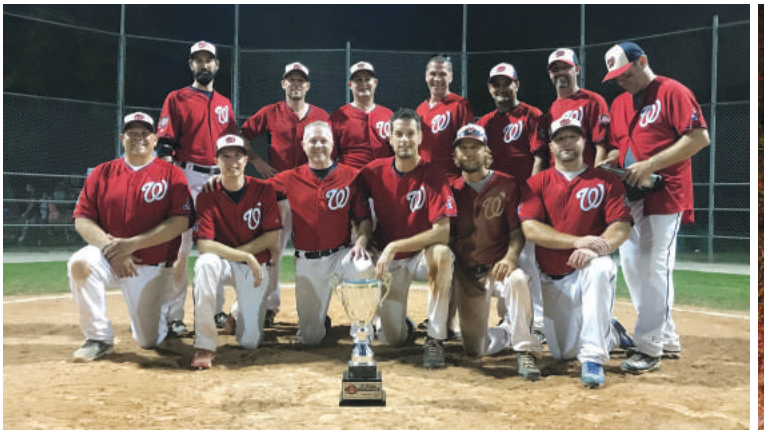
Robert Ramsdale, a local software developer and family man, is in his third year in the LMBL. As of late August, he had an ERA of ... wait for it ... 0.00! Ramsdale has played baseball for 30 years – and in some impressive places, including New York, Georgia and Australia. He's even played against our very own London Majors, during his time with the Brantford Red Sox. During his Intercounty Baseball League career, he was part of five championships teams (all five of his seasons with the Red Sox).

Meanwhile, at the plate, Jeff Roy has been a force. When a player has a batting average over .500, you take notice. Roy had 11 hits in 21 at-bats (.524) with 10 runs scored in his first 29 plate appearances. Roy got his start in hardball right here in London. He played one year with the Majors, and then played softball for some time until he joined the LMBL in his thirties.

LMBL players and teams (which will likely include the likes of Ramsdale, Roy and the Werewolves) will be celebrated at the Year End Awards Banquet on Friday, October 18 at the Willows Golf & Country Club. Tickets are available through the London Mens Baseball League website.

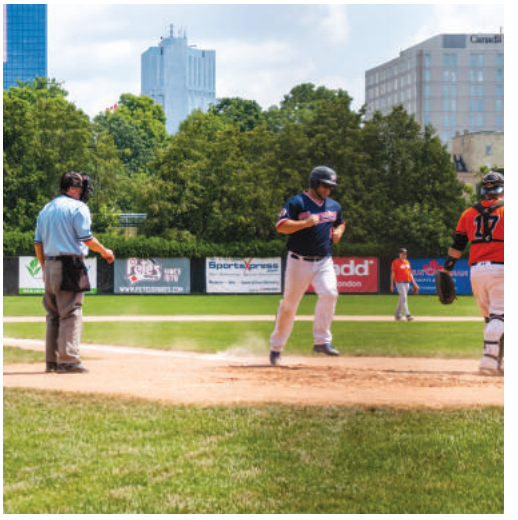
It should be an exhilarating and exciting final stretch run of the regular season and the playoffs. Stay tuned! You can find our full schedule online at:

www.lmblbaseball.ca



The Werewolves, in first place in the LMBL standings at the time of publication, won a league title (A champions) back in 2017.

Werewolves player Robert Ramsdale back in his playing days in 1994!



Photos by Brian Vella (Vella Inc.)
It's been another fun and exciting season of LMBL baseball in London, and the Werewolves, shown here playing at Labatt Park, appear to be the team to beat in 2019.

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Big strides for Mosquito Selects

Contributions by Glen Keogan and photo by XGEN Photo

Improvement was the name of the game for the London West Tincaps Mosquito Select team in 2019, as the squad made great strides from their early spring days to the end of the season – when they nearly beat the top team in the league (with a record of 17-1) in one of the final regular season contests of the year.

"As a team, that's when we realized just how much we had improved during the course of the year," said Glen Keogan, the team's head coach. "Our team really demonstrated a strong level of commitment and an eagerness to learn this year."

The Mosquito age group is where a lot of new aspects of the game of baseball are introduced, and the Tincaps Select team learned a great deal and put new skills into action all year – both in practices and games. That included base stealing, secondary defensive responsibilities, and the concept of the live ball.

"For many of the players, live pitching is relatively new," said Keogan, who is in his fifth season coaching baseball (and first with the Tincaps Selects). "We were able to have all 13 players pitch this year. We have dedicated time in practice for working on throwing mechanics so that it can also transfer to their pitching."

The team, which played its home games at Hazelden Park, also worked on game awareness, which really showed as the season progressed – in both league play and tournaments. The Mosquito Selects even earned the top seed heading into the LDBA B Championship tournament.

"The team really came a long way," said Keogan. "And our players learned to be really good teammates, all working towards the same goal. We finished strong."

London West Tincaps Mosquito Select team: Back row: Darryl Keen (asst. coach), Luka Peeters, Owen de Rond, Sean Joiner (asst. coach), Spencer Keen, Patrick Keogan, Glen Keogan (head coach). Front row: Dan Schafer (asst. coach), Isaac Kim, Bryce Siemens, Saxon Gicante, Maddox Sullivan, Evan Bosch, Nash Dixon, Aidan Joiner, Sam Schafer, Dylan Scott. Absent: Richard de Rond (asst. coach), George Kim (asst. coach)

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Soccer all-year round!

Submitted by Soccer Express

Hello, London soccer community!

It was a great spring/summer 2019 this season here at Soccer Express London, and we are thrilled with the continued support we receive from the southwestern Ontario soccer community!

For those who don't know who we are, we're a retail specialty store (located at 1070 Wellington Road in London) dedicated 100% to soccer only, selling team uniforms, cleats, indoor and turf shoes, as well as equipment like shin pads, balls, and coach's accessories.

Also, we carry many products for club teams like Manchester United, Barcelona, Real Madrid, and more!

The 2019 season has brought us some big moments – on and off the pitch – this year, as we were a key sponsor of the Ontario Soccer Summit hosted here in London, and we established club partnership with Whitecaps London for their team uniforms and equipment.

The fall indoor season is here, so stop on by and check out our latest turf and court shoes – or maybe a set of jerseys for your team!

We hope everyone has had a safe and successful summer season, and we hope to see you this fall.

www.soccerx.com

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Teamwork the key for U8 squad

Contributions by Luigi Sorbara

It was a season of learning, development and fun for Byron Soccer's U8 Girls Yellow Team in 2019. And it was one of success on the scoreboard, as well, as the team enjoyed wins in league play, festival victories, and exhibition game triumphs!

In their first year of competition in the U8 division of the Elgin Middlesex District Soccer League (EMDSL), the U8 Byron Girls Yellow Team showed impressive teamwork on the pitch, as the players helped each other succeed and showed that team chemistry is vital for success.

"Their greatest asset is the ability to play for each other – both at practices and in games, says Luigi Sorbara, the team's head coach. "On the field, this is evident in their defensive strength and their ability to score on the counter."

Byron Soccer U8 Girls Yellow Team
Back row (left to right): Matt Stout (coach), Andira Silcox, Nicole Ferreira, Whitney Stout, Maia Ladrouz, Natalia Sorbara, Luigi Sorbara (coach). Front row: Makenna Clayton, Sofie Nother, Harper Klassen, Samantha Sproule. Missing from photo: Whitney Fordjour, Madelyn Higgins, Reese D'Alessandro, Steve Sproule (coach)

The girls played their home games at the Byron Optimist Club, under the tutelage of Sorbara, who has been involved in soccer – both as a player and as a coach – for more than 30 years. Currently in his fourth season coaching with Byron Soccer, he was helped by Coach Matt Stout and Coach Steve Sproule, both second-year coaches with the club.

"I've been coaching some of these girls since the age of 4 in the Active Start program in Byron," says Sorbara. "While skill development and a better tactical sense of the game is the focus, the coaching staff also promotes an environment of constant learning and camaraderie."

That was certainly on display – both on and off the field – for Byron's U8 Girls Yellow Team throughout the 2019 season, and now they're looking forward to switching their focus indoors and to the 2020 season.

"The coaching staff would like to thank the parents for all their support throughout the year," says Sorbara. "We look forward to our move from 5v5 to 7v7 in U9 next season!"

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Soccer Express, also known as Soccer X, is a retail specialty store in London that carries all of your soccer equipment and uniform needs.

Keeping kids in the game

By Liz Litchfield

Many thanks to all the volunteers that came out again this year to support NorWest Soccer! We know your lawns go un-kept, your holidays are often delayed, and you borrow time from work and your families in order to gift players with soccer. We appreciate your choices and commitment to the kids! THANK YOU for helping the community soccer cycle continue!

Gone are the days of military-styled 'drills' for NorWest Soccer! Why? Because: "If it's not fun, they quit" (reportedly, 70% of youth Canadian players quit soccer by the age of 14). This is the motivating philosophy behind both the Coach Education Plan and Long Term Player Development program introduced at NorWest Soccer.

Whether you call them drills or activities may seem like semantics, but it's this new era shift in soccer thinking that NorWest promotes year-round. We run our indoor program with the same kid-friendly perspective because our nationally and provincially certified coaches and their youth mentees know that guided development and game realistic activities are important aspects of soccer skill development.

"That you can catch more flies with honey than vinegar is not news. Using this idea to teach kids to love to run with the ball is new to some," said Club Administrator Jennifer Jaquith. "If they love the ball and make good friends with it, and if no one squashes that passion, they will play soccer for life!"

NW's indoor program will be Saturday afternoons at the BMO Centre, utilizing Ontario Soccer's Preferred Training Method and focusing on having fun while developing skills using small-sided games and soccer-based activities.

www.norwestsoccer.com

NorWest Soccer is focused on fun. A new shift in philosophy (including putting into place the Coach Education Plan and Long Term Player Development program) is keeping kids in the game and loving NorWest Soccer!

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Summer of success for Strikers

Contributions by Metaxas Makedos

What a season it has been for the Woodstock Strikers U14 Girls soccer team, as the team has routinely won on the field and bonded as a team off the pitch.

"Coaching and management staff are very proud of the accomplishments of this team," said Metaxas Makedos, the team's head coach. "The girls train hard and play hard, and they continue to stay engaged in all aspects of the game."

The Strikers got off to a fast start, finishing as finalists in the WRSL Kickoff Cup in May. In June, the team earned a gold medal at the Ancaster Heritage Days Tournament, beating Waterloo United in penalty kicks in the final.

Then it was the 53rd annual Robbie Charity Tournament, one of the highlights of the season. The U14 Girls triumphed at the event, one of the largest, longest-standing charity tournaments in Ontario. And they did so in exciting fashion, downing Barrie FC on the eighth round of penalty kicks for the win.

In July, the Strikers traveled south to participate in the University of Notre Dame's Advanced Training Camp in South Bend, Indiana.

Upon returning, the U14 Girls participated in the British Soccer Camp week in Woodstock, and then won the Brantford Classic tournament at the U15 age group (one age group higher), beating Mount Hamilton 1-0 in the final.

The Strikers went 15-1-4 in tournament play, ranking 15th overall (in their age group) in Canada on the website Got Soccer. In league play, they were 9-2-0, at the time of this writing, with three matches remaining, locked in a tight battle for first place. The next round of tryouts happen in September.

www.woodstocksoccer.com

The Woodstock Strikers U14 Girls team (b. 2005), shown here in front of the iconic Word of Life mural (aka 'Touchdown Jesus'), participated in the University of Notre Dame's Advanced Training Camp in South Bend, Indiana in July.

One of the highlights of the 2019 season for the Strikers was being crowned champions at the 53rd annual Robbie Charity Tournament, which they won on the eighth penalty kick against Barrie FC.

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Women's Competitive Soccer League for Ages 18+
Women's Premier Soccer League Open Age

Men's Rec Soccer League
Men's Competitive Soccer League
Men's Premier Soccer League

SW Alumni Adult Co-Ed Rec League
SW Alumni Adult Co-Ed Competitive League
SW Alumni Adult Co-Ed Premier League

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Contributions by Andre Iarusso and Shawn Gaulin

Norwest Soccer U7 Boys House League team

It's all about fundamentals at the U7 level in NorWest Soccer's house league program, and that's exactly what the WINMAR-sponsored team focused on this summer. Playing at Hastings Park and at North Park Baptist Church, the U7 boys team practiced and played hard all season long, improving their soccer skills and their teamwork skills, too.

"The team showed noticeable improvement from the beginning of the season," says Andre Iarusso, the team's head coach. "We wanted them to get comfortable with the ball and passing to each other."

And they came a long way in that regard, working on ball control and distributing the ball to each other while absorbing all sorts of other soccer knowledge and fundamental skills.

Iarusso learned a lot, too. Serving as a coach for the first time, he focused on doing whatever he could to help his players improve – and, of course, to have fun!

Norwest Soccer U8 Girls team

Most of their players were just six years old at the beginning of the soccer season, but the WINMAR-sponsored NorWest Soccer Royals actually played in the U8 Girls division, which was a challenge but also brought out the best in the young players, too, as they competed against an older age group.

"Our girls were playing against bigger and faster players, but they were never discouraged," says Shawn Gaulin, the team's head coach. "Every save, every goal and every milestone was a huge accomplishment."

The Royals focused on the basics, including practicing ball control, passing and shooting, while also working on team play and positioning to help their development into becoming better soccer players.

"The girls always showed up with a positive attitude, ready to take on new challenges," says Gaulin, a second-year coach who has played the game most of his life. "I'm very proud to see how far they have come since the first practice."

Most of the team's practices were at Hastings Park, with their games in and around London. Throughout the summer, they worked hard and showed dedication as they improved their skills, made friends and had a lot of fun.

"I'm excited about the girls' future in the sport," says Gaulin. "I hope they all continue playing soccer. I also want to thank all of the parents who supported us throughout the season by cheering us on from the sidelines. Go Royals!"

NorWest Soccer U7 Boys House League team
Back row (players, left to right): Shaun, Felix, Jaxson. Front row: Ben, Brennan, Landon

NorWest Soccer U8 Girls team
(Left to right): Shawn Gaulin (Coach), Harper Gaulin, Nabila Hammoud, Olivia Thompson, Cassidy 'CJ' Malott, Zoe Sich. Absent: Alexandra Katsios, Alexis Bastida, Amelia Martin-Smith

Academy gains national youth status

Submitted by FC LONDON

FC LONDON's youth academy, 'London TFC Academy,' has been named by Canada Soccer as one of an elite group of clubs in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario that have been provisionally granted the Canada Soccer National Youth Club Licence. The Program was launched in 2017, with the Canada Soccer Professional Club Licence, and expanded to youth soccer in 2018 – in collaboration with Provincial and Territorial Association Members. It focuses on the incorporation of international best practices.

"We are pleased to announce the exemplary 39 National Youth Club Licence holders that have worked diligently over the past 12 months to demonstrate a willingness to improve, to collaborate, and most importantly to raise the level of youth football in our country," said Jason deVos, Canada Soccer's Director of Development.

Meanwhile, at the local level, OPDL licensee, 'London TFC Academy,' has signed an affiliation agreement with local youth soccer Alliance FC, a club that boasts over 600 participants across all ages. When combined with existing affiliations with St. Thomas SC and Strathroy United FC, London TFC Academy now has visibility to over 3,400 players across 235 teams in the region. The affiliation opens up opportunities for Alliance FC players, including both boys and girls, to be 'placed on the London TFC Academy OPDL Development Roster' for the balance of the season (specifically those born in 2005, 2006, 2007, who play in U13, U14 leagues in 2019).

"This helps us provide a pathway in alignment with Ontario Soccer's vision of player development," said Martin Painter, Alliance FC Technical Director.

At the senior level, the Women's League1 squad finished in third place in the regular season with a record of 7-3-3, while Jade Kovacevic won the Golden Boot with 21 goals in 13 games. The top eight teams make the playoffs.

The Men's League1 team didn't fair so well, squeaking into the playoffs in seventh place. The team did, however, finish the regular season with a six-game unbeaten streak, and marksman Connor Wilson netted 11 goals in 15 games.

"With the combination of our FC LONDON teams operating in League1, our direct partnership with recent MLS Champions Toronto FC, and our growth in 2019, we're thrilled to bring such a strong pathway to the region,' said Ian Campbell, CEO of FC LONDON and London TFC Academy.

With over 25 teams running in 2020, assessments are already underway with dates and times for boys and girls available at www.fclondonacademy.ca/fallassessments.

www.fclondon.ca

League1 Golden Boot winner Jade Kovacevic (Photo by R. Daniel Anderson)

League1 leading scorer Connor Wilson (Photo by RADIOWESTERN949)

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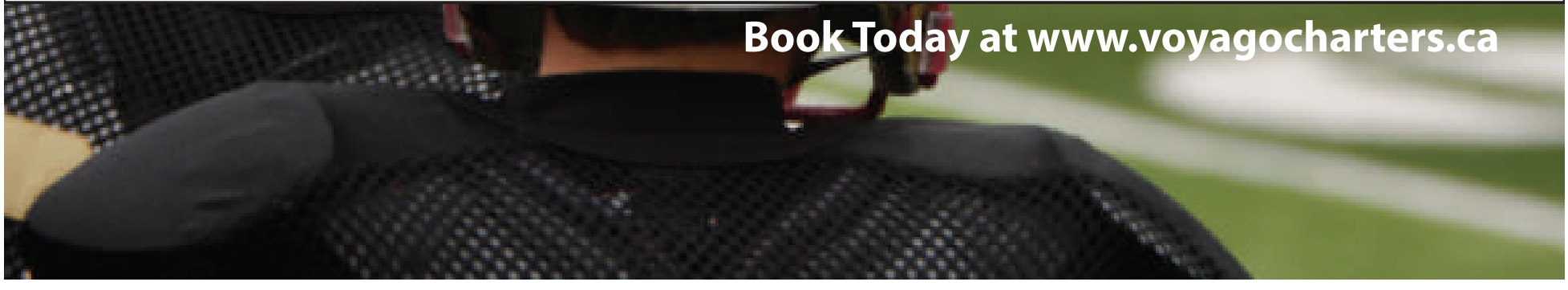

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Sexual assault cases are complex

By Nick Cake for Millars Law

It's a sad reality that without alcohol many people involved in the criminal justice system would be looking for work – me included. Alcohol plays a major role in the majority of the files I work on, and a significant role in almost all other cases most criminal law firms carry.

Aside from the obvious impaired driving cases, alcohol plays a primary role in almost every sexual assault case that comes through my door. At the heart of most sexual assault cases is the concept of consent. Often, the prosecution will rely upon alcohol consumption and drunkenness to show that the complainant was incapable of consenting to sexual activity. Lately, though, it has come to my attention that this concept of drunkenness may be overinflated by the Court and applied to inappropriate factual scenarios.

Of course, no one is a proponent of sexual assault – the members of the Millars Law team included. However, we are proponents of the criminal justice process, which is bound by the concept that everyone is innocent until proven guilty. This idea forces the state (or prosecutors) to prove guilt, leaving all accused persons to not have to prove their innocence.

This concept is the cornerstone of the criminal justice system, and it exists in all cases – even sexual assault allegations. The law is clear when it comes to sexual assault allegations – no consent will equate to a conviction for sexual assault. The law is also clear that the participants to the sexual act must have the ability to make the conscious decision to move forward sexually, at all times, during the sexual interaction. What I think is misunderstood is how alcohol affects one's ability to consent. At law, consent is fluid and must always be present. Clearly, if someone is incapacitated by alcohol, passed out, close to (or heavily) intoxicated, they would lack the ability to consent; and any sexual interaction with that person would result in a sexual assault conviction.

Drunkenness, on the other hand, does not automatically take away one's ability to consent. Cases involving mere drunkenness are less clear cut. The law does allow for drunken consent, and being drunk is not the equivalent of an incapacity to consent. There are times, and I am sure many of us have had them, where 'drunk you' has made a decision that 'sober you' regrets in the morning. But making a drunken choice that one later regrets does not automatically make that person a victim of sexual assault. Drunken consent may be regrettable, or even hard to remember, but that doesn't take away from the fact that it was given at the time. Further, courts in Ontario have held that the fact that a complainant does not remember engaging in the sexual act, or has a complete blackout of the time in question, is not the same as lacking the ability to consent.

Sexual assault cases are very serious matters – both for the complainant and the accused. The ramifications of a sexual assault allegation, whether ultimately proven or not, are long-lasting. Intoxicants like drugs or alcohol are controlled substances for a reason. They alter the mind and make people do things that they may not normally do. Engaging in acts that one would not do while sober does not automatically make them a victim. An allegation of sexual assault should never be taken lightly by anyone involved.

Nick Cake

If you or someone you know has been accused of sexual assault, you need a lawyer who is not afraid to ask the tough questions and not afraid to attack the court of public opinion. Millars Lawyers should be your first call. Contact **MILLARS LAW** today today when you Can't Afford to Lose: **519-657-1LAW** or **Info@millarslaw.com**.

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Nick Cake, discusses a recent case and the uphill
battle that those charged with sexual assault have to face in order to clear their name.
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Submitted by Ellison Travel & Tours

Canada Sports Tours, a division of Ellison Travel & Tours, designs customized rugby tours planned by Brad Greenwood, a professional travel planner with 25 years experience as an international rugby player and coach.

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Day 2: Arrive in Glasgow, transfer to Edinburgh
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Day 3: Training session at local school/ rugby club
- Guided tours in the afternoon, team meal in evening

Day 4: Match Day 1 vs. local club

Day 5: Visit Edinburgh Castle, the Royal Mile, Princess Street
- Training session, sightseeing, watch a professional rugby game (based on availability)

Day 6: Match Day 2 vs. local club

Day 7: Travel day to second location
- Check into accommodations, training session, team meal

Day 8: Match Day 3 vs. local club

Day 9: Training session at local school/ rugby club
- Guided sightseeing in afternoon

Day 10: Travel back to Glasgow
- Training session, sightseeing, watch a professional rugby game (based on availability)

Day 11: Match Day 4 vs. local club

Day 12: Fly home from Glasgow

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An International debut

Submitted by Forest City Diving Club

The end of the competitive season is always a time for reflection. This year, Forest City Diving Club (FCDC) holds new provincial records: Daria Chambers in the Girls D1 1M and 3M and Alexa Fung in the Girls C1 1M and Platform.

At the Jr. Development Nationals, Nigel Chambers received a bronze medal on Platform and 6th on 1M, while Daria Chambers placed 7th on all three boards, and Alexa Fung placed 4th on 1M and 7th on 3M and Platform. Alexa places 4th on 1M and 7th on 3M/Platform as well receives the Outstanding Diver award in the Girls C1 Group. At the Elite Level, Nathan Marshall placed 10th in Platform, and Camryn Hughes placed 10th on Platform. Joshua Inglis was the synchro gold medalist, and Katelyn Fung was 2x Silver medalist on 3M/Platform as well as the recipient of the Isabel Warren award for the highest scores in Girls B Compulsories at Nationals. Both earned a spot on the Jr. National Pan Am team that took place in Santiago, Chile in August. Katelyn did not disappoint with her international debut, as she came home with a gold, silver and two bronze medals, the only Canadian to compete in four events. Joshua Inglis competed in the Men's 3M Synchro event and earned a bronze medal finish.

At the Aspire Level, our athletes participated in multiple invitations across the province. These athletes continue to improve and strive towards podium finishes. Congratulations to our National Team Ontario recipients: Daria Chambers, Alexa Fung and Katelyn Fung, and to our Aspire Team Ontario recipients: Raquel Scratch, Ayden Reid and Ella Hayes.

FCDC is continuing to grow its competitive diving groups. This year we added the Rising Stars program, which is a pure foundation program. Not ready to commit to the sport but want to experience jumping off the high boards? Try our Learn to Dive program. We offer four 10-week sessions starting Sept 9. Online registration is open now!

www.forestcitydiving.com

Representing Canada at the Jr. Pan Am Games in Santiago, Chile this summer, Katelyn Fung (right) earned an impressive four medals (one gold, one silver and two bronze), while her FCDC teammate, Joshua Inglis, won a bronze medal.

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Local area qualifiers will raise money for Child-Can, the official charity of the Canada Life Championship.

Childcan
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ChildCan is the official charity of the Canada Life Championship

Qualifying sites

June 19-Hermitage Club/Green Hills-TBA
June 21-Highland Best Ball/Highland Country Club-12-6 P.M.
June 22-St. Mary's Golf Club-9 A.M.
July 9-Highland Ladies Guest Day/Highland Country Club-1-6 P.M.
July 10-Highland Men's League/Highland Country Club-10-6 P.M.
July 18-The Spark/Highland Country Club-1-6 P.M.
August 6-9-Bob Martin's Driving Range-8:30-9:30 P.M.
August 16-Highland Men's Guest Day/Highland Country Club-9-2P.M.
September 10-Canada Life Pro-Am/Highland Country Club-TBA

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Mackenzie Tour Players Impress at RBC Canadian Open

Once again proving that Mackenzie Tour players can compete at any level, Canada Life Open champion Jake Knapp and Bayview Place DC Bank Open presented by Times Colonist champ Paul Barjon both challenged their games against those on the PGA TOUR at the RBC Canadian Open in Hamilton, Ont from June 6-9. Knapp managed to make the cut at the event, making an eagle and a birdie on holes 16 and 17 on Friday to qualify for the weekend on the number, eventually finishing in 70th place. Meanwhile, Barjon, who won the Canada Life Championship in 2016, took his momentum from his win in Victoria and placed T20, tieing household names such as Dustin Johnson and Justin Thomas. Both Knapp and Barjon hope to join the 24 Mackenzie Tour alumni currently playing on the PGA TOUR. To date, seven Mackenzie Tour alumni have won on the game's greatest stage. See Barjon and Knapp this year in London at the Canada Life Championship

For Gallant, golf is life

By SportsXpress Team

Brian Gallant loves golf. And the lead coach of the London Junior Golf Development Centre has played at some of the most elite golf courses on the planet. His favourite? Pebble Beach.

Brian Gallant, the lead coach at the London Junior Golf Development Centre, has played some of the greatest courses out there, including Pebble Beach

"Playing there was an amazing experience," said Gallant, who also runs Performance Golf London. "The course has incredible scenery."

Gallant has a thriving golf business and is heavily involved in coaching young players. The Londoner, who is certified by the Titleist Performance Institute as a Level 3 Junior Coach, has led his players at many high-profile events, including the Ontario Summer Games, the GAO Ontario Men's Amateur, the Canadian Junior Girls Championship, and the US Kids World Championship.

"I feel fortunate to have the opportunity to make my living coaching players of all skill levels, and helping them play their best golf ever," Gallant said.

Through his coaching experiences, Gallant has earned several accolades, including the 2011 Ontario Coaching Excellence Award, and the 2011 Ontario Golf Coaching Award. The coach received Golf Canada'a highest junior golf program award this year with the Future Links Facility of the Year, 1 of 6 programs in Canada to receive this. But the talented golf coach remains humble.

"Each experience and accomplishment is a total team effort," he said. "And I'm proud of the development and accomplishments of all Team London juniors that I have been involved with."

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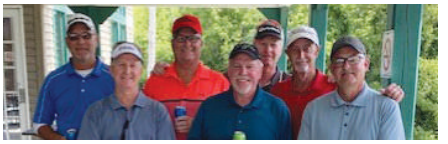
Seniors Tour thriving

Contributions by Dirk De Vries and John Bracken

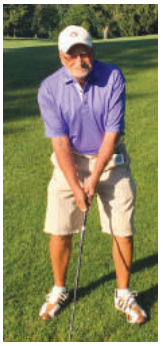


The London Seniors Tour has really found its stride in recent years, as more and more people are participating and showing interest in the game of golf in a Tour environment that is well-run and offers the opportunity to play the game with peers at a reasonable cost.

In fact, with a full roster of 128 players in 2019, this year marked the first time a waitlist had to be used (with 10 more golfers standing by). This certainly speaks to the increased level of interest in the Tour.

The Seniors Tour was started back in 2000 by Fred Kern, who was the head pro at the Thames Valley Municipal Golf Course. The Tour went on a hiatus after Kern resigned in 2008, but was resumed under Steve Killi, who ran things from 2009-2013, and Al Penford, who oversaw the Tour in 2014. But since 2015, things have been organized by 'The Committee,' the current executive that has really grown the Tour and contributed to the enjoyable experience that it is today.

"Having a committee helping to organize the eight Tour events spreads the work around, as we are all volunteers," says John Bracken, the current Director of the London Seniors Tour, noting that organization has been key for the Tour. "We have a computer software program that allows us to do a personalized email to all 128 players quickly with the draw for each event. The program also updates all players' handicaps after each event and ensures that everyone's handicap is based strictly on the results obtained in the Tour. This ensures that players get into the proper flights based on those results."



Dirk De Vries

London Seniors Tour members get ready to hit the links (Left to right): Paul Jackson, Nick Pasic, Dave Dawson, Murray Clark and Tom Johnston

Dirk De Vries, a member of the Tour committee, believes that, among other things, getting the eight different flights right is what makes the Tour a success. It allows for better, more even competition – both in regular play and in skins play as well.

"Another benefit is that while most Senior events make you ride a cart, we allow walking," says De Vries, noting that about 40 percent of players on the Tour choose to walk. "And we don't make people pay for food – only the green fee. This gives all members a chance to play some good competitive golf with their peers at a reasonable cost."

Scores are posted to the Tour's website (web3.golfsoftware.net/20319) after each event, thanks to Rob Austin, who ensures that everyone's handicaps are up to date. The website also includes other information of interest to Tour members. The final two (of eight) Tour events of the 2019 season happen in September, with members wrapping things up at Forest City National on Sept. 23.

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Submitted by Forest City Volleyball Club

The Forest City Volleyball Club (FCVC) is the longest-running and most successful youth volleyball club in London. Entering its 28th season, the club is proud to announce the 2019-20 Coaching Roster! With multiple coaches dedicated to each team, our athletes have the greatest opportunity for development and reaching their full potential.

The coaches at FCVC are truly what differentiates this club from any other. They have a high degree of experience, credentials and passion for the sport of volleyball, and many are FCVC Alumni who have enjoyed successful varsity careers and returned to FCVC to give back to the next generation.

COACHING ROSTER

Girls Line-up:

12U: Susan Buckman, Sergio Chuy
13U: Susan Buckman, Sarah Richardson, Mike Botetzayas, Makaila Ngan
14U: Sergio Chuy, Nancy Dool-Kontio, Jaime McKee, Teaghan Hignett, Peter Gauld, Peter Grail
15U: Pete Sum, Chuck Chelladurai, Lauren Zanini, Steven Simone, Jen VanSas
16U: Lloyd Rumble, Wayne Thompson, Brittany Gordon, Courtney Sestric, Danielle Grasman
17U: Joffre Ribout, Bob Mann, Bonnie Cooper, Rachel Jones, Leah Mousseau, Carly Nutregan, Chris Monteiro
18U: Stu Pow, Corey Crossan, Rob Paas, Justin McCulloch

Boys Line-up:

13U: Michelle Lange, Rob Mizak, Carolyn Jaegger
14U: Chris Smith, Doug Inglis
15U: Bryan Wimalasekera, Niki Nikolov
16U: Josh Westgate, Matt King, Tom Kerkhoff, Steve Janzen, Kevin Rowe
17U: Devin Atkinson, Bryce Halpenny, Mark Peckham, Travis Wintjes
18U: Dave Phoenix

FCVC Development Pathway

Our Developmental Pathway starts athletes as young as 4 to 8 years old in our Mini-Acorn program, where physical literacy is explored in a safe and fun environment. From ages 9 to 14, boys and girls participate in our hugely popular Acorn program, where they develop volleyball skills in a fun and fast-paced 90-minute program of skills and scrimmages. Registration is now open for Fall and Winter programs. These sessions sell out quickly! Visit our website.

Competitive Program

When athletes are ready to take the next step, they can try out for one of our FCVC Competitive teams, which are run for boys and girls from grade 6 through 12. Our competitive teams have had great success for over a quarter century, winning multiple provincial and national championships. Our tryout schedule is available at www.forestcityvolleyball.com. Register today!

Elementary School Tourney

The Elementary School Tournament hosted by FCVC is back by demand for its 23rd year! It is open to all London and St. Thomas area elementary schools. It's a great way to give the coaches and teams a chance to work on skills they have been developing and to prepare for the school season.

Over the years, we have had as many as 30 teams compete. The timed tournament is designed to include a competitive component and give coaches time to develop kids new to the game. The tournament date is October 19 for Girls teams (at Fanshawe College) and November 2 for Boys teams (at Supreme Courts). For more info and to register, please contact Coach Bob Mann at sherrimann@rogers.com.

forestcityvolleyball.com | facebook: FCVCLondon | twitter: @go_fcvc | instagram: forestcityvolleyball

WALK-IN NOTARY

Club has the 'Fire' for V-ball

Submitted by Walk-In Notary

With a new season of fall and winter sports underway, Walk-In Notary is providing an opportunity for various minor sports associations in London and surrounding areas to profile themselves. This month's organization is the London Volleyball Club (LVC)!

Organizations define success in different ways, depending on their values. In many sports organizations, success is defined by wins and losses. At LVC, though, the guiding motto is 'love the game.' The London Volleyball Club defines success not by the number of wins, but by the number of participants who love the game and give back to their community.

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Over the past seven years, LVC has helped create lasting memories for athletes and instilled a love for the game that has our alumni hooked on volleyball for life. Here are some statistics from LVC's first seven years:

- 71 athletes have graduated to play university/college volleyball
- 28 athletes selected to represent Team Ontario
- 13 athletes selected to represent Team Canada in international competition
- 11 alumni now coaching in the Ontario Volleyball Association
- 9 alumni now refereeing in the Ontario Volleyball Association
- 8 Team Ontario/Team Canada coaches on staff
- Annual donations and fundraising efforts from individuals and teams to local charities – including the London Food Bank, 'Koats for Kids,' and Lifespin.

The London Volleyball Club (LVC) has enjoyed tremendous success in its first seven years, graduating numerous talented volleyball players who have pursued the game at university as well as on provincial and national teams.

If you would like to get involved in the great sport of volleyball, in any capacity (player, official, coach or volunteer), check out what LVC means by 'LOVE THE GAME' by visiting www.lvcfire.com or getting in touch with the organization!

As is sometimes the case, athletes may need to travel outside of Canada to participate in tournaments. When someone under the age of 16 travels outside Canada, a consent letter may be required. At Walk-In Notary, we are happy to assist you with drafting or notarizing your consent to travel letter (or both), as well as any other notary needs. We are open Monday to Friday from 9-5 pm, no appointment necessary. You can find out more information at:

www.walkinnotary.ca

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The importance of cross learning

By Michelle Keeri-Szanto for Family Karate Centres

At some point, those of us who train in martial arts have all experienced working with someone who has that certain sparring stance – they hold the training pads in just the right way, or they have that unbeatable technique down to a science. In martial arts team training, this happens quite often. We all tend to gravitate towards partners we feel relaxed or comfortable with for one reason or another. The reality is, it is important to continually switch up your training partners in order to maximize your growth and potential. Changing up your training partners is just as equally important as working on a new technique or combination.

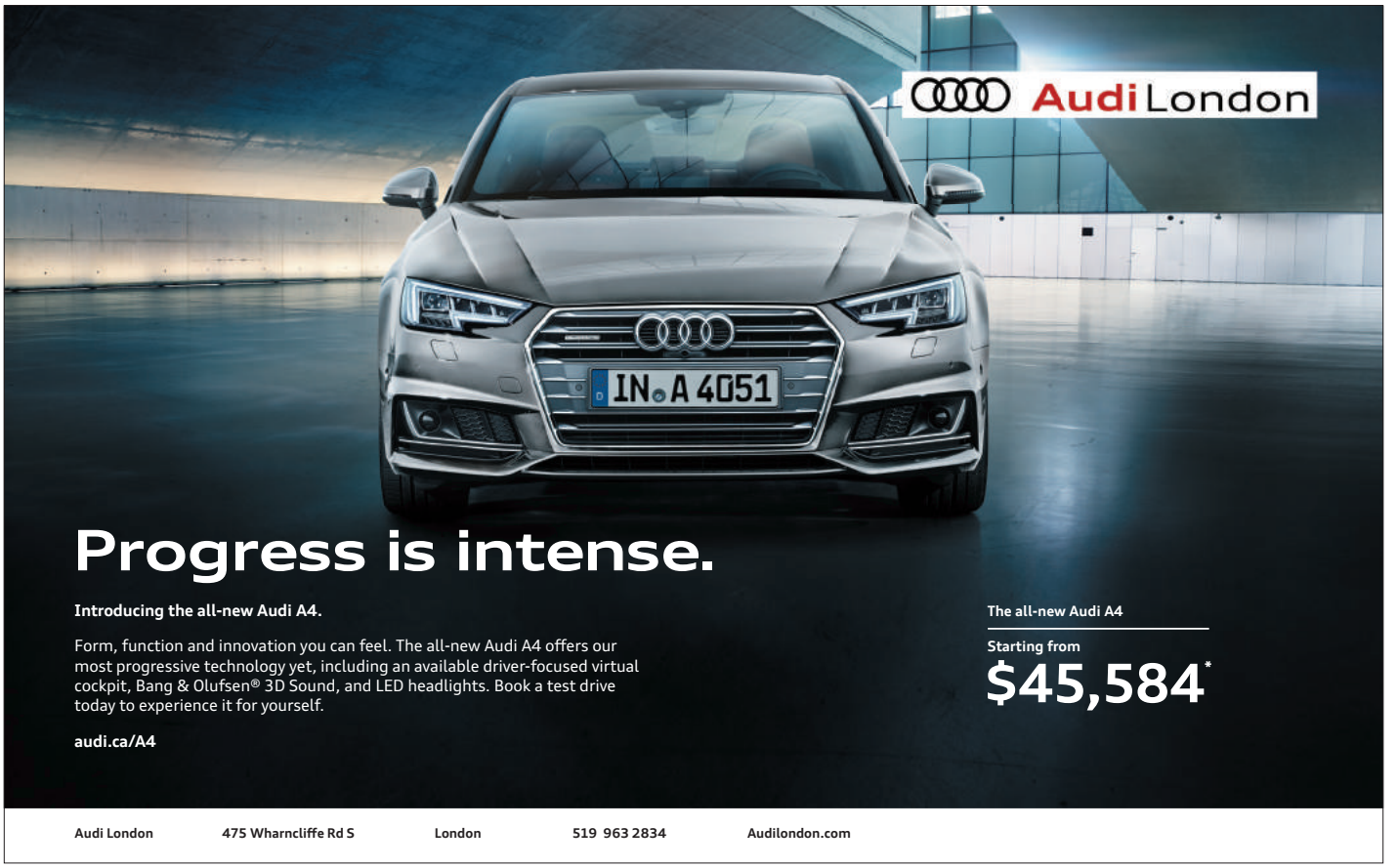
While sparring in regular team classes is a respectable way to develop and improve skills, introducing cross-learning experiences provides the opportunity for students to go beyond the norm – to venture outside of their comfort zone, test new skills, build confidence, gain new experiences, and even be open to critique from new perspectives.

The Family Karate Competition Team has been doing exactly that. Early in the season, the team took part in a cross-learning experience by hosting the Sealy Karate School from Guelph at Family Karate Centres. Recently, both schools were able to reciprocate this learning experience in Guelph. Meanwhile, a few of our veteran team members have had the opportunity to train with United Family Martial Arts in Hamilton, and in late August the whole team traveled to Hamilton to continue our cross-learning experiences with Team United.

A special thanks to the Elite Strike Team and Team United for the great experiences, the sportsmanship and the comradery!

www.familykarate.ca

In order to improve their skills, the Family Karate Competition Team has been participating in cross-learning experiences, competing against new opponents – including from the United Family Martial Arts club in Hamilton and the Sealy Karate School in Guelph.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(Karate) School is back in session!

Submitted by Olympic Karate

Summer is over, the vacations have finished, and trips to see family and friends have ended. BUT that means Olympic Karate has ramped up and has welcomed the return of its students to the dojo – as well as the arrival of new families this fall!

Our program is designed to help active children to FOCUS; shy children to gain CONFIDENCE; and inactive children to improve their FITNESS.

The Summer/Fall schedule is an open schedule with classes for each group Monday thru Thursday and Saturday. Our Little Dragons (ages 4 to 6) program has two classes per day so that our families are able to fit classes into their family work and activities.

All new students at Olympic Karate start with a free trial class to see if they like our classes (and parents are able to attend the classes and have their questions answered by our professional staff).

This year, we have a 'BACK TO SCHOOL SPECIAL.' It includes two weeks of training – plus a uniform – for only $19.99. Visit us online at www.olympickarate.on.ca to learn more!

www.olympickarate.on.ca

At Olympic Karate, youngsters receive instruction from professional staff, who target three primary goals while training in karate: help kids to FOCUS, gain CONFIDENCE, and improve their FITNESS.

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ABOUT FCGC

Forest City Gymnastics (FCGC London Inc.) is a 22,000 square foot facility that offers men's and women's gymnastics. We offer a wide range of programs starting from age 18 months up through adult for both boys and girls. Regardless of age or ability, there is a class for you! FCGC runs four recreational sessions per year, with classes running evenings as well at Saturdays and Sundays. All classes are structured to promote physical activities that develop gross motor skills, spatial and body awareness, coordination, balance, strength, power, flexibility and creativity. Even adult classes have become a sold out commodity.

FALL CLASS REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Classes run 15 weeks from
September 8, 2019 to December 21, 2019

We run 4 recreational sessions per year
Summer, Fall, Winter & Spring as well as
PD Day Camps, March Break & Summer Camps

PD DAY CAMPS 2019/2020 YEAR

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$200 +HST 17-24 children

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WWW.FORESTCITYGYM.COM

Developing gymnasts for life

Contributions by Nick Bejenaru

London Beje Gymnastics offers recreational and competitive gymnastics programs for both boys and girls. Kids can start as early as 18 months of age and continue into their teenage years.

Beside kids programs, the club also offers 'Open Gym' for adults who would like to stay in touch with gymnastics or want to learn some basic skills or develop their existing skills.

Beje Gymnastics runs four sessions per year for recreational athletes, including: Fall (Sept. to Dec.); Winter (Jan. to Apr.); Spring (May and June); and Summer (July and Aug.). Summer camps and birthday parties are available as well.

The Gymnastics club offers a family-oriented environment, where every member feels the love for the sport, and where kids can enjoy coming to practice without feeling pressure. The club's goal is to build confidence and self-esteem in youngsters who will then be able to transfer their knowledge, skills and experiences from the gym into their life later on.

Who runs the club? It's Nick Bejenaru, a former Olympic athlete who was a member of the Romanian gymnastics team at the 1988 Seoul Olympics and the 1992 Barcelona Games. Bejenaru also competed at the 1989, 1991, 1995 World Championships, earning a bronze medal in 1995 in Sabae, Japan.

A pretty impressive gymnastics resume, to be sure. Before moving to Canada in 2000, Bejenaru coached the men's Romanian Junior Team for three years. Once in Canada, he coached at the St. Thomas Gymnastics Club for five years before opening London Beje Gymnastics that same year.

A member of Gymnastics Ontario, London Beje Gymnastics provide quality Artistic Gymnastics programs in a safe and positive environment. Kids are encouraged to learn and develop balance, flexibility, body strength, motion of skills and a good gymnastics foundation.

Interested in learning more? Visit the club (1565 North Routledge Park, Unit #1-2), phone 519-777-3080, or email bejegym@hotmail.com. Give your child an opportunity to learn with the best!

londonbejegymnastics.com

London Beje Gymnastics is all about providing gymnastics programs and skills development while helping to develop self-esteem and confidence that youngsters can then carry with them for the rest of their lives.

Nick Bejenaru, who founded London Beje Gymnastics in 2005, is a former Olympian, having competed in the 1988 Seoul Summer Games and the 1992 Barcelona Games.

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New school year, new season!

Submitted by The Little Gym of London

With the fall season here, it's time to reflect on what was a record-setting summer at The Little Gym! All our day camps were full, and we had full groups in our School-Readiness programs all summer as well. Thanks to everyone in London who entrusted us with their children throughout the summer.

Our Fall season is now here, with the new school year in full swing. Starting on September 7, we have over 60 classes running per week – many of which have already filled. However, there is still space, and our programs are designed so that children can join anytime and not have to wait until the beginning of a new session. We understand if you are new and a bit apprehensive, so if you prefer to try us out before you enrol, you can do that for a small fee (which is refundable if you enrol). Or, you can enroll for 10 weeks to give it a try for a longer period (sometimes, younger children take a few weeks to acclimate to our programs).

Meanwhile, we also offer amazing Awesome Birthday Bashes on weekend afternoons. All our programs can be found online at www.tlglondoncan.com or by calling us at 519-642-0660.

The Little Gym is the world's premier enrichment and physical development centre for children ages four months through 12 years. For over 40 years, our trained instructors have nurtured happy, confident kids through a range of programs, including parent/child classes, gymnastics, dance and sports skills development – plus enjoyable extras like camps, Parents' Survival Nights and Awesome Birthday Bashes.

What sets The Little Gym apart is its Three-Dimensional approach to learning. Programs are structured around the following three tenets: 'Get Moving!' for physical development; 'Brain Boost!' for learning and problem-solving development; and 'Citizen Kid!' for social development. Our goal is to help children develop transferable skills and build their confidence here, so that they can do their best at home, at play, and in the classroom. Children learn life skills such as listening, taking turns, following directions, and managing emotions.

Ed & Mari Hughes, along with Gym Director Erin Hagglund and an amazing team of instructors, pride themselves on the role they play in helping children in their communities grow and develop into wonderfully well-rounded little people. As families' lives have become busier, it's become increasingly important that we work to maintain The Little Gym as a familiar and comfortable environment for children to develop new skills, take part in new experiences, and explore different unique talents.

www.tlglondoncan.com

The Little Gym of London provides programming that follows the organization's three main tenets, which together allow for young children to develop physically, learn and problem solve, and develop social skills. And they have a whole lot of fun!

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A summer packed with cheer

Submitted by Power Cheer Gym

Cheerleading and the return to school go hand-in-hand, but leading up to the symbolic kick-off to the new season, hundreds of cheer athletes trained at the Power Cheer Gym over the summer.

PCG hosts 'World's' teams

Two high-powered training camps were held at PCG over the summer. Our sister gym, Power Cheer Toronto, brought over 120 of their top International division athletes in for an intensive training weekend and retreat. PCG also hosted this year's Young Gunz world's team camp, where 80 athletes from the GTA (along with our Level 5 athletes) got their elite seasons underway. We love the 'cross-pollination' of ideas when multiple gyms come together to train!

High School cheerleading is dead

Sadly, school-based cheer teams have all but vanished in the London region. But it doesn't mean that potential cheer athletes cannot get involved. Power Cheer Gym offers three different ability levels (Sr2, Sr3 and Sr5) for the 11 to 18-year-old age range, and September starters are both welcome and encouraged. Ask about the September starter discounts, too.

Entry level/Novice teens

Mystique, the Sr. Level 2 team at PCG, draws athletes from diverse sports backgrounds, including gymnastics, dance, soccer, swimming, and even roller derby. The coaches acknowledge the diversity and invite students of all backgrounds to get involved. No matter what athletic arena you come from, cheerleading might be the next sport for you – particularly if you are currently in a school that no longer runs a cheer program.

Academy

The Academy Circus School operates in the Power Cheer Gym.

"Positive and certified coaches who care about your growth are continually training. With patience, perseverance, passion, and dedication, anything is possible!" says Meaghan Wegg, the Academy director and National Circus School alumna who toured internationally in Cirque du Soleil's Quidam.

The Academy has been growing exponentially since it opened its doors last year to London's performing arts enthusiasts, with classes offered in aerial arts (hoop, silks, trapeze), acrobatic arts/contortion, flexibility, tumbling and dance. Now is the time to register for the recreational, competition or performance programs. Visit www.theacademycircus.com for info. To register, email meaghan.coaching@gmail.com.

www.powercheergym.com

pcgvipers **@PCGVipers**

The Academy Circus School, where you can fly, flip, and soar to new heights

Young Gunz getting their flip on at PCG

The Young Gunz Camp hosted teams from the GTA

The many 'other' sports of our Senior Level 2 athletes and coaches

Sister gym PCT comes to London to get 'World's Ready'

It's a Royal Rising!

Submitted by CheerStrike

Season Seven, the year of the Royal Rising, is well underway. All summer, the competitive teams at the CheerStrike gym have been working hard learning their routines and training new skills. The gym was a busy place every week in August with choreography camps. We are looking forward to seeing these routines on the competition floor, starting in November, when the Royal family travels to Sandusky, Ohio for our first competition at the Kalahari Resort.

In September, we begin our regular practice schedule for our competitive teams and begin a new Fall Session for all our amazing classes. This fall we'll be offering recreational cheer and tumbling classes for children of all ages (from 18 months to 12 years old). Our parent and tot classes, as well as our kinder tumble and cheer classes, provide very young children with the valuable experience of learning in a group scenario while exploring all the amazing things their bodies can do. Fall 2019 will also see new leveled group tumbling classes that offer children the opportunity to train with friends on the exact tumbling skills they are working hard to achieve.

In the competitive side of the gym, we have 18 teams, ranging from ages 3-18. We are proud to run the largest competitive cheer program in London, enabling CheerStrike to have a team at every age and level. Our teams will compete all over southwestern Ontario from November through to April. In March, we'll be taking a few teams to Florida to compete for the first time at the UCA Championships. We look forward to seeing all our teams rise to being their very best all season long!

www.cheerstrikeroyals.com

CheerStrike, which offers London's largest competitive cheer program, will be competing all over southwestern Ontario this fall and winter – at all age groups from 3 to 18!

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Move Together!

By Richelle Hirlehey

One of the questions most often asked of Dance Extreme is, 'At what age can my child start taking dance?' You may be surprised to learn that Dance Extreme offers classes for even the youngest movers – and their parents. The Move Together program is designed for children 18 to 36 months old and their parents/caregivers to develop a joy of movement and dance together. These classes combine structured activities with free dance, play, and movement exploration. Even at this young age, our Move Together dancers develop gross motor and listening skills while exploring dance in a creative and encouraging environment.

Says Mya Sponseller, a mother of two: "My daughter and I completed two sessions of the Move Together Class at Dance Extreme. I'm so happy my daughter was able to start learning dance at such a young age and that I was able to be a part of it. Both teachers we had were energetic and kept the kids (and adults) interested and engaged. The dance steps are learned by using fun songs, relays, and games. We loved learning new steps and exercises each week. Thanks to this class, my daughter is prepared to move on to the next level and dance in a class without me. We cannot wait to continue classes this fall at Dance Extreme."

"Children need high-quality time with parents and caregivers—that is what is most beneficial to children and what can have a positive effect on them as they grow" (Alvarado).

Move Together classes take place in 12-week sessions, which allow you and your child to spend this quality time together doing an activity that benefits the mind, body and the bond that you share with your child. Our Fall Session begins on September 14 and continues for 12 weeks.

www.danceextreme.com

The Move Together program, a 12-week session at Dance Extreme, provides a fantastic opportunity for young children (18 to 36 months old) and their parents to enjoy movement and dance classes together.

MOVE TOGETHER PROGRAM

Where: Dance Extreme Inc – 725 Notre Dame Drive

When: September 14 for 12 weeks

Cost: $192 + HST

For more information or to register, visit www.danceextreme.com

The story of Dance Steps Studio

By Gabrielle Gillespie

From the moment she slipped on ballet shoes for her first class at age 12, Donna Bayley knew that dance was what she wanted to do for the rest of her life. Today, Donna is the proud owner and director of Dance Steps Studio and is thrilled to be celebrating the studio's 30th anniversary.

After only joining ballet due to her mother's urging to improve her gymnastics, Donna fell in love with dance. In fact, she quit gymnastics and never looked back. An early inspiration was her first teacher, Dorothy Scruton, an icon of dance in London who operated a local studio for more than 60 years.

"Dorothy was a woman that was full of life, energy, and passion," says Donna.

After graduating high school, Donna set out to make her dreams of dancing professionally a reality. In addition to the support she received from her parents, she worked tirelessly to pay her way to attend the Banff Summer Ballet Program, and later the Royal Winnipeg Ballet (RWB), where she trained for a total of three years.

From there, Donna's love of teaching continued to grow. Very quickly, she went from teaching students in the workout room of her apartment building to signing a lease for her very own studio, Jazz Dance (and then Dance Steps Studio).

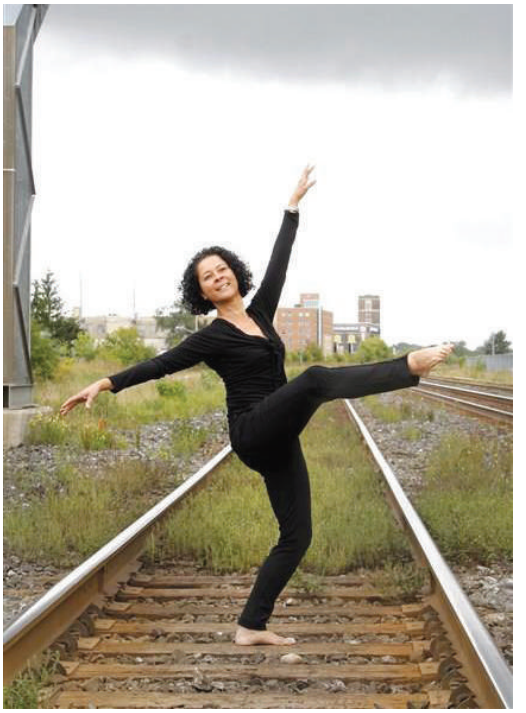
When Donna first opened her studio, she estimates there were only five other studios in London. Flash forward to today, however, and the city is booming – with at least 30 studios.

"I think it's great that we have so many," says Donna. "I think there is competition, but I think it's healthy competition, and it creates an even higher standard of dance in Canada."

Although she remains humble and hesitant to take credit, Donna has trained many students who have gone on to become professionals themselves, as well as some who have opened their own dance studios. Says Donna, when asked her biggest piece of advice for young children hoping to pursue dance: "Don't give up, follow your dreams. It is possible."

Donna is extremely grateful for the love and support of her friends, family, and all the wonderful teachers and staff who have helped make the last 30 years so positive.

www.dancestepsldn.com



Donna Bayley, the founder of Dance Steps Studio

At a competition, Donna imparts her wisdom with some Dance Steps Studio athletes.

Donna coaching the performers of the Nutcracker (Dec. 17, 2017).

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Embracing multi-sport athletes

Submitted by London Minor Football Association

For over 60 years, the London Minor Football Association (LMFA) has focused its house league football on teaching young players teamwork and sportsmanship while keeping active in the fall. With the football season neatly sandwiched between summer (lacrosse, baseball, and soccer) and winter (hockey, basketball, and volleyball), our players can play and benefit from multiple sports.

Studies have shown that young athletes who specialize in one sport may have an increased risk of social isolation, anxiety, and burnout, which can ultimately lead to them leaving sports altogether.

Young athletes are more likely to stay interested longer if they are always learning new skills. As well, using the same muscles repeatedly for a long time can lead to serious injury. By playing different sports, players stress different muscles throughout training, which improves overall strength and conditioning.

Multi-sport athletes display improved health and wellness, motivation, confidence, and creativity – not to mention, playing for the sake of the game and having some good, old-fashioned fun.

LMFA games are played on the turf fields at Citywide Park and the new 1Password park in St. Thomas. The season runs from mid-August to the end of October.

Please visit www.lmfafootball.ca or call 519-852-4465 for more information on joining a team this fall!

www.lmfafootball.ca

Garin Roles of the Bulldogs peewee team makes a fantastic catch during LMFA action

The captains of the Cobras and Wolverines meet at midfield

The Hammers atom team prepares for a game last season

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to grow the skills of as many players as possible.

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Sept. 29
Oct 6, 20, 27
Nov 3, 10

NATIONWIDE LACROSSE

WHAT IS NATIONWIDE LACROSSE?

Nationwide lacrosse is run by professional lacrosse players Shawn and Turner Evan's.

Both Shawn and Turner have played for some of the best lacrosse coaches in the world. They believe that the knowledge which they have learned, and the successes had as players, will help them teach the next generation of lacrosse players.

Nationwide is committed to growing the game of lacrosse to new and existing players.

Check londonlacrosse.com for registration details

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#BestFirstDay the goal for kids in need

Submitted by Preferred Insurance

It is teamwork and partnership at its finest, and the goal of the program is to make a huge positive community impact. This year marks the seventh year that Preferred Insurance has participated in the 'Rock Back to School' Program, alongside partner Classic Rock 98.1FM, and the company has reached another new milestone in 2019. A record 200 backpacks have been collected during this year's 2019 drive, ringing up the 7-year total to 762!

School supplies collected through the program go to kids in need of assistance in our region. They are collected and distributed by the 'Best First Day' Program partners, The Salvation Army and The Thames Valley Education Foundation. As a thank you to their generous business partner supporters, Team Preferred hosted a special day at their office on August 29, complete with lunch and Classic Rock 98.1FM broadcasting live-on-location to acknowledge and celebrate their joint success.

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Preferred Insurance has set a new record this fall, collecting 200 backpacks as part of the 'Rock Back to School' initiative, which distributes the back-to-school supplies to kids in need through the 'Best First Day' program.

Preferred Insurance is still accepting back-to-school supplies at their office, and monetary donations can be made at www.preferred-ins.com/rbts.

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A caring, inspiring hockey experience

Submitted by George Bray Sports Association

As the sun set on another warm and wonderful summer, and the kids headed back to school, the GBSA board was busy preparing to 'drop the puck' on our 51st hockey season. Canada's game!

All of us involved are so thankful to be part of this 'Hidden Gem' of a league. The GBSA was established in 1968 by George Bray who started out with a big idea: to allow children and young adults with special needs to play hockey. In the beginning, we had only a handful of players. Since then, our objective has been – and continues to be – to grow the league. Last year we registered over 240 players and outfitted almost half of those players with our loaned equipment. We have three divisions: Junior (including a Fundamental's group for beginners); Intermediate; and Senior.

GBSA has a no-cost equipment loaner program and a hockey school to help players sharpen their skills and/or improve their skating. Our registration fees continue to remain low (only $180 for all divisions and $70 for Hockey School) thanks to the continued support of our dedicated sponsors.

The GBSA board members, coaches and on ice-skaters are all volunteers which also helps to keep our fees low. And they are among the most caring people you will find in sports.

We know you're out there ... Everybody knows someone who can benefit from this league. Teachers, Educational Assistants, relatives, friends, and neighbours – we need your help to spread the word.

Our registration dates for the 2019-2020 season, held at Kinsmen Arena on 20 Granville St., are September 14, 18, 21, and 25. The first puck drops Saturday Sept. 28. All games are played on Saturday mornings at Kinsmen Arena.

For more information about the George Bray Sport Association, check out our website or please contact Murray Howard at murrayhoward@execulink.com or 519-200-8422. And don't forget to 'like us' on Facebook!

www.georgebraysports.ca

The George Bray Sports Association, now in its 51st year, continues to provide wonderful opportunities for children and young adults with special needs to play hockey – the great Canadian game!

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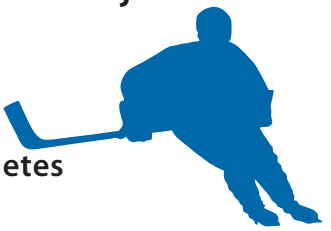

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Remembering an epic season

Submitted by the Junior Knights (Major Bantam AA White)

What a year it was for the London Junior Knights (LJK) 2004 Major Bantam AA White Team in 2018-2019, as they became the winningest Team in LJK history with an overall record of 66-5-5, while winning each of the following tournaments: the Ajax Break The Ice; LJK Triple 20; Silver Stick Qualifier; and the International Silver Stick (with Jacob Julien achieving MVP and Player of the Tournament honours and Aidan Bokor receiving the Goalie of the Tournament award).

The Major Bantam AA White Team was also crowned Alliance Champs and ultimately OHF Champions with an unbelievable team performance in the final game – not to mention a stellar goaltending performance that led to a 2-0 win.

The team could not have achieved such success without the fine coaching of Adam Simpson (a first-year head coach), Jack Dundas (assistant coach), Darrell Ibbitson (trainer) and Brian Bokor (manager).

Here is a list of the unbelievably talented group of young men that will never forget their 2018-2019 season! Aidan Bokor (G), Caden Curran (G), Noah Ahrens (D), Matthew Balloch (D), Rocco Barletta (F), Dylan Dundas (F), Aiden Finley (F), Adam Ibbitson (D), Jacob Julien (F), Kyland Mels-Williams (F), Zack Nemeth (F), Damian Pancino (F), Tyler Rennie (F), Jaden Reyers (F), Ben Schiedel (D), Garren Thomas (D) and Arthur Vlasyuk (F).

www.londonjuniorknights.com

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BLAZERS

Blazers thrive – on and off ice

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By Naomi Reintjes for B.A.D. Blazers Hockey and photo by Shooters Sports Photography

It was strong season for the B.A.D. Blazers Peewee B hockey team in 2018-19, as the girls developed their skills throughout the season, posted a strong record, and overcame several hurdles along the way.

Despite the fact that many of the Peewee B Blazers were playing together for the first time last season, the team instantly gelled. With half the team being minor Peewee and the other half major Peewee, the Blazers had a remarkable season and faced some really tough competition and seasoned teams.

The B.A.D. Blazers is a girl's hockey organization that runs conglomerate teams from areas around Belmont, Aylmer and Dorchester and plays under the Ontario Women's Hockey Association (OWHA). Because female competitive hockey players can try out and play for any OWHA organization (unlike the OMHA), some girls can end up playing B.A.D. from areas much further away.

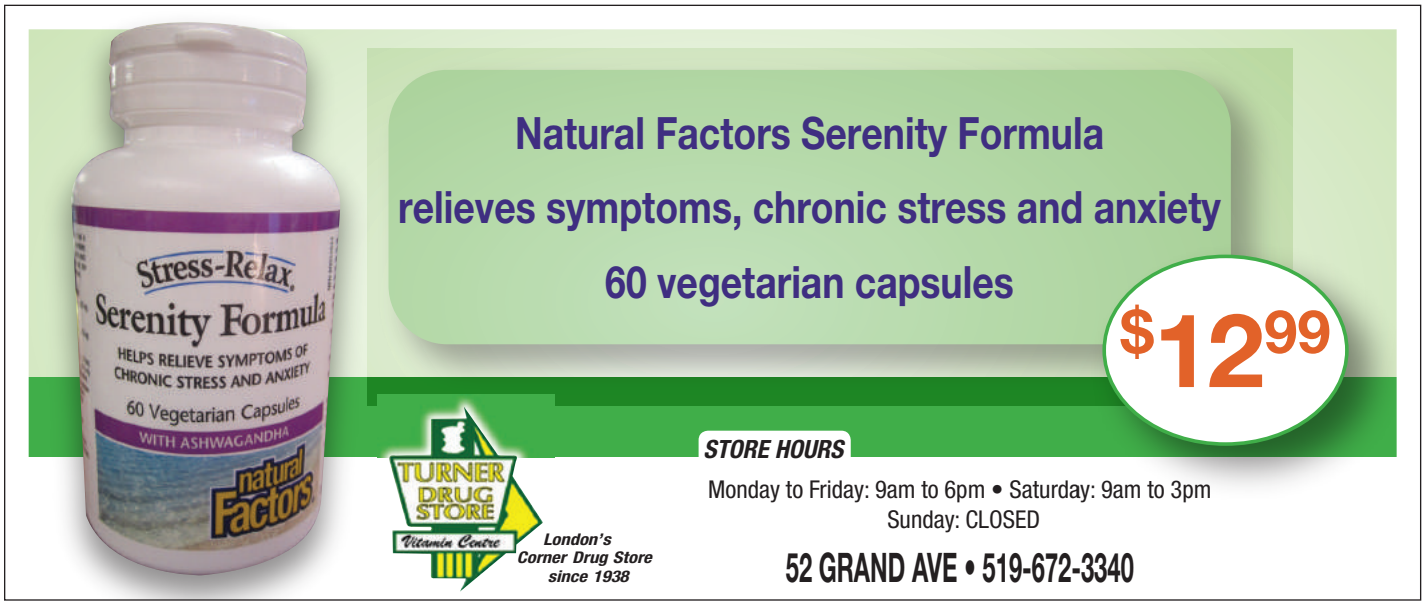
Travelling was a major component of the team's 2018-19 season, with places like Windsor and Sarnia being within the competitive loop. As expected in hockey, there were a couple of concussions and a few torn ligaments during the year, but all players eventually returned to the ice prior to the end of the season.

B.A.D. Blazers Peewee B Hockey Team: Back row (left to right): Mark Cooper (Asst. Coach), Keith Sollner (Forward Coach), Kylie, Natalie, Leah, Makenna, Bill. Arthur (Defense Coach), Johnny Knelsen (Head Coach). Front row: Taryn, Avery, Eden, Hailey, Taylor, Molly, Clara, Reese, Mya. Goalie: Kaileigh. Not in photo: Naomi Reintjes (Trainer), Leanne Sullivan (Trainer), Jodi Nutley (Manager)

B.A.D. took second place in a tournament in Waterloo after facing a tier 2 team from the United States. That was one of three out-of-town tournaments the Peewee B Blazers played last season.

After over 120 ice times of games and practices, the team ended the season over .500 with a record of 23-19-5. When it was all said and done, the 12 and 13-year-old girls, and their parents, had spent seven months eating, living and breathing hockey at an arena somewhere in Southwestern Ontario. It became the norm. So much so that parents must have woken up the day after the season ended thinking, 'So, what are we supposed to do now with our time?'

Said the team's head coach, Johnny Knelsen: "Coaching this team was a pleasure, and I really enjoyed getting to know this group of amazing girls. We were a dynamic, high-scoring team, and we've shown huge growth in game knowledge and playmaking skills over the past few years. For me, the greatest part of coaching is still watching the girls build friendships and grow as individuals – both on and off the ice. I think this is still the most important aspect of team sports. Go Blazers!"



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A new era begins

Contributions by London Knights

With the 55th season of Major Junior hockey upon us in London (as well as the 20th year with the Hunter brothers at the helm), the Knights will have a new look in 2019, as the team unveiled a revamped logo and a new set of jerseys in August, which will both celebrate the team's history and look ahead to the future of junior hockey success in London.

The iconic London Knight helmet was inspired by previous London Knights logos – particularly the logo from the 2002-2008 era, when Dale Hunter, Mark Hunter, and Basil McRae became owners of the team. The new logo is the 10th in franchise history, including the inaugural logo when the Knights were born from the previous London Nationals brand in the 1968-69 season.

The London Knights have introduced a revamped logo for the 2019 season

"To be able to represent many of the previous achievements that this franchise has accomplished, while being able to look forward to the future was incredibly important to us," London Knights Owner, Vice-President, and General Manager, Mark Hunter, said in a release about the new logo design. "In looking to develop the new generation of London Knights, this new logo will serve as a reminder of the hard work, passion, and dedication it means to be a London Knight, as represented by our alumni – both in hockey and in life."

Meanwhile, the Knights unveiled new uniforms for 2019-2020 as well, and the club is 'turning back the clock' to capture the colour scheme of the late 80's and early 90's (to go with the 2005-era logo, when the Knights were crowned Memorial Cup champions).

The Knights are looking to turn the page on a disappointing playoff exit last spring, and they appear to be in a good position to do so, with a strong roster and a highly successful veteran coaching staff. The team held its annual training camp in late August, where fans for a chance to get their first glimpse of the new squad in action. The puck drops on the 2019-2020 Knights regular season September 20 (vs. Peterborough) at Budweiser Gardens, and the team will play seven other home games before the end of October. The 68-game schedule runs from the fall, throughout the winter, and wraps up on March 21 (at Sarnia) before the OHL playoffs begin.

Entering the 2019-2020 season, the Knights have won 40 games in seven of the past eight seasons and have qualified for the OHL playoffs 19 years in a row, winning four OHL Championships and two Memorial Cup titles during that span. **www.londonknights.com**

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Hockey training for all ages

Contributions by Snipe Academy

Snipe Spotlight: April Clark

April Clark is one of many talented hockey players in the region who train at Snipe Academy, where she works hard to improve her skills and take the next step in her hockey career. And it's been a very successful one at the university level for Clark, who enjoyed a phenomenal year in 2019 with the Western Mustangs.

A fourth-year student last year, Clark was dominant on the ice for the Mustangs, who finished second in the OUA. The 22-year-old forward amassed a league-best 33 points while scoring 20 goals, which was the most in the country. For her efforts, Clark earned virtually every accolade, including being named OUA Player of the Year, Forward of the Year and a First Team All-Star, while also being named Western's Female Athlete of the Year.

At the national level, Clark was named a First Team All-Canadian, the only OUA player to receive the honour. This summer, the St. Mary's, ON native competed in her second Hockey Canada Summer Showcase as a member of the U Sports all-stars.

April Clark, who trains at Snipe Academy, is a star player for the Western Mustangs. Last season, the 22-year-old was named a First Team All-Canadian after leading the OUA with 30 and leading the country with 20 goals.

About Snipe

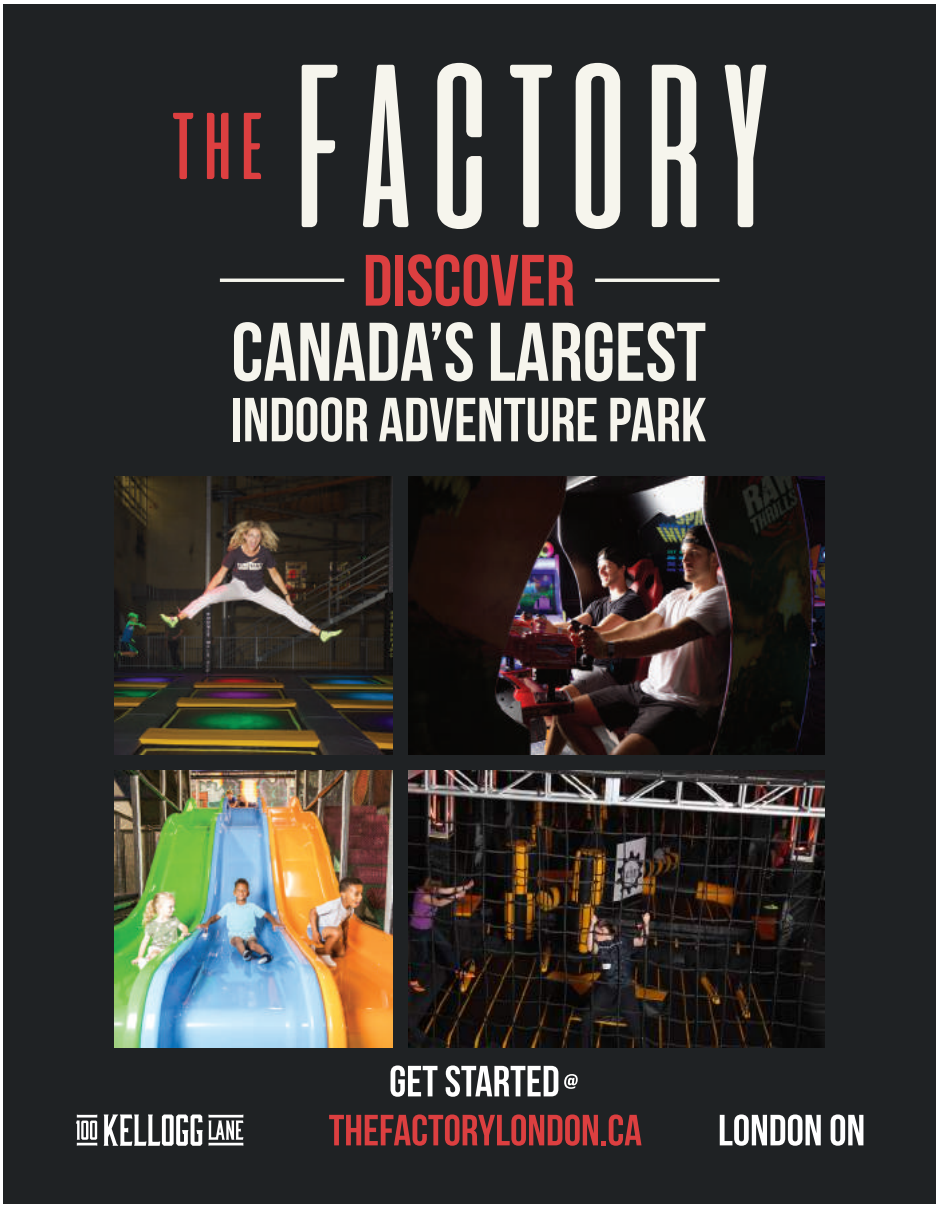
Snipe Academy offers top-notch instruction from a collection of talented current and former hockey players and coaches. Both players and teams access the facility to work on their skills, receive instruction, and become better all-around hockey players.

Monthly memberships are available, at a reasonable rate, and allow for players to access the facilities for a shooting class every day. Group classes are available for teams to access, where players are taught creative ways to get their reps in while learning new skills. Snipe's talented instructors push the athlete outside their comfort zone in a fun and exciting way.

What else? The Skills Zone area has prograde toys to practice your skills and get your reps in; the RapidShot system is the only professional shooting system in the world that measures accuracy, shot speed and reaction time; RapidHands allows players to stick handle and track their progress through a scoring system; and the parent lounge offers a place to relax while watch your young athlete.

Developed by a AAA hockey coach, along with the help and support of fellow coaches and parents, Snipe Academy was created to enhance hockey in the London community. The best part about Snipe? All training takes place on skates – on the training ice at Snipe. This gives players a real hockey experience – without the cost of ice time.

www.snipeacademy.com



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